

Andy

3 November 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

1. Andy Goodpaster called Pearre on 1 November and stated the White House had received a report that some of our people were "briefing" the opposition party. Pearre checked with Dick Bissell who stated he knew nothing about any such activity. Dick commented, however, he had seen a few people socially but in no wise engaged in conversations which could be termed briefings by any stretch of the imagination. Before Pearre called Bob Amory, I suggested that possibly Bob's call on Chester Bowles in connection with the alleged schism between State and CIA might have led to the report Andy referred to. Upon contacting Bob, he stated he had seen no one other than Chester Bowles and only for the purpose of finding out if he knew anything about the schism. Bob did say that Mr. Bowles had asked how things were and he had given him a brief rundown but nothing more than would have been furnished any other member of the Congress if requested.

2. When Pearre advised Andy of the Bowles/Amory meeting and told the reason therefor, Andy was somewhat taken aback and asked Pearre to come to the White House to discuss this matter with him and Jerry Persons which he did on 3 November. Andy started off the conversation by asking Pearre if you had told him of the President's injunction at a Cabinet Meeting that representatives of the security agencies should not approach the opposition party during the campaign or respond to requests without prior approval of the White House since it is the President's firm belief that such agencies should stay out of politics. Andy said, for example, a general (unnamed) had been contacted by the opposition party for some information and when this request was referred to the White House, it had been turned down by the President who stated he would take full responsibility.

3. Pearre told Andy that all he had heard about contact with the opposition party involved briefings for the candidates and it had been made clear to him that such briefings would be given to the candidates only and not in the presence of any members of their

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staffs. Pearre said he did not call the White House in connection with the schism matter since after discussing action to be taken with Livie Merchant and senior officers of the Agency (Messrs. Bissell, Amory, and [redacted]) it had been decided that in order to protect the President, we would proceed with the action indicated in the attached message. (At this point Pearre advised Andy and Jerry Persons of the people we contacted.) Pearre explained that in our conversations we did not ask these people to do anything but merely reported what we had heard and that if the Democratic Campaign Committee went ahead with making the alleged schism between State and CIA a campaign issue, it would be most harmful to intelligence and, in particular, our relationships with our foreign opposite numbers. Pearre pointed out that with one accord the people contacted agreed, and offered on their own initiative to do what they could to prevent this reported allegation from becoming a campaign issue.

4. Both Generals Persons and Goodpaster remarked that apparently we had been successful but had taken a "terrible" chance in talking with Scoop Jackson, and wound up by saying they felt this incident should in all probability be reported to the President.

5. Pearre told them you had been advised of the action taken and also of your comment thereon but, in the final analysis, if any error in judgment had been made it was his.

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Remarks:

John:

Kindly return to me, Eyes Only, after
it has served your purpose.

JSE

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